

this category. The convention of 1868 removed this ban; but as they had long been classed as mulattoes they were obliged to patronize the negro schools. This they refused to do as a rule, preferring that their children should grow up in ignorance, for they hold the negro in utmost contempt and no great insult can be given a Croatan than to call him 'a nigger.'

"Finally, in 1885, through the efforts of Mr. Hamilton McMillan, who lived near them and knows their history, justice long delayed was granted them by the General Assembly of North Carolina. They were officially recognized as Croatan Indians; separate schools were provided for them and intermarriage with negroes was forbidden. Since this action on the part of the State they have become better citizens.

"They are almost universally landowners, occupying about sixty thousand acres in Robeson County. They are industrious and frugal, and anxious to improve their condition. No two families occupy the same house, but each has its own establishment.

"They are found of all colors from black to white, and in some cases can not be distinguished from white people. They have the prominent cheek bones, the steel-grey eyes, the straight black hair of the Indian. Those showing the Indian features most prominently have no beards. Their women are frequently beautiful; their movements are graceful, their dresses becoming, their figures superb.

"Mr. John S. Leary,* a prominent politician of Raleigh, and professor of law in Shaw University, was a member of the tribe, and one of their number has reached the Senate of the United States, for Hon. Hiram R. Revels, who was born in Fayetteville, North Carolina, in 1822, and who was a senator from Mississippi in 1870-71, is not a negro, but a Croatan Indian.

"John Lawson met some of the Croatan Indians about 1709 and was told that their ancestors were white men. White settlers came into

* The late Mr. John S. Leary wrote Dr. Weeks from Fayetteville, N. C., under date of July 22, 1891:

"I do not know as to whether any considerable number of the 'Croatans' emigrated from the State at any time in a body. Quite a number who were connected with the Croatans in Robeson County left the State at different times. Senator Hiram R. Revels, his brother, Willis B. & Absalom, and two sisters, some of the Oxendines, Leary's and Dials; I do not know the exact number. My father's mother was a Revel, born in Robeson County, was 2nd cousin to Hiram. She married an Irishman named O'Leary. Father was born in *Sampson County*, on the *Big Coharie*, his parents having moved to that county. In 1806 they came to Fayetteville, where father lived until he died in 1880. Father came from the 'Croatan' stock. My mother was born in France, and was brought to this country by her parents in 1812. Father and mother were married in 1825. In 1857 my father sent my brother, Lewis Sheridan Leary, to Oberlin, Ohio. While there he formed an acquaintance with John Brown and went with him to Harper's Ferry in October, 1859. He was killed on the 17th day of October, 1859, while guarding what is now known as 'John Brown's Fort.' I saw this fort for the first time in 1880. It is a small brick house. I have a grand uncle, my father's mother's brother, living now in the Croatan settlement in Robeson County, 108 years old. As soon as I can make it convenient to see him I will have a talk with him and put on paper whatever information I can get from him and give you the benefit of it."